

INSPIRING STORIES FROM AND ABOUT REAL PATIENTS

Successful Outcomes

MAGAZINE™

**BOUNCING BACK
FROM A FALL**
regaining independence
after a serious injury



**WINNING
THE GOLD**

A STORY OF COURAGE,
HONOR, & ONE SOLDIER'S
INCREDIBLE WILL TO WIN!

+
105-Year-Old
dances with his wife for **FIRST**
time in 33 years... in a PT clinic!

Successful Outcomes

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(here is a \$50,000
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Successful Outcomes
Bouncing Back
from a Fall 22

Successful Outcomes magazine™ is published by FYZICAL®, LLC, as a business information and educational service to the Physical Therapy community.

505 South Orange Avenue, Suite 101, Sarasota, FL 34236. Phone: 833.399.4225

Please email reprint requests, letters and questions about editorial content to: Successful Outcomes magazine™ > jloewy@fyzical.com
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» SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES

Thrilled to Be Cured from Chronic Dizziness, Patient Gives PT \$50,000 Check!

BY BRIAN WERNER, PT, MPT

I was in shock; I couldn't believe it. Here I was, holding a check made out to me for \$50,000. Something like this does not happen every day!

My patient, who had been suffering from severe vertigo for over five years, was desperate for a solution. She was bound to a wheelchair because her dizziness was so bad. She had already been to many doctors and tried other unsuccessful treatments, but it wasn't until she came to see me at my Balance

Center in Las Vegas where she was finally relieved of her dizziness. She proclaimed my treatment a "miracle cure." No longer bound to a wheelchair due to crippling dizziness, her life had just drastically changed for the better. She was so grateful she was finally cured, she felt she had to do something.

"Now don't go spending this on a Porsche!" she jokingly stated. I had no intentions of doing that.

Witnessing the life altering changes in people once they are cured from severe dizziness is a remarkable feeling. I love helping people; I love being able to effect this positive change in their lives. Balance is my business and there was really only one thing I could do with that check—put it back into my business.

I took that \$50,000 and put it towards purchasing the Epley Omniax chair, a state-of-the-art machine that uses maximum force to reposition crystals in the ear, which affect balance. I



“She laughed and told me not to go spending it on a Porsche. I had no intentions of doing that.”

– Brian Werner

became the first physical therapist in the world to own one. Now, I can help even more people with dizziness issues.

Truth is, many Americans live their lives with severe dizziness, but they don't have to! Dizziness and balance disorder problems are one of the most treatable ailments. Patients, and their primary care doctors, need to know that balance disorders are serious and can be treated with physical therapy. The perception now is that people go to physical therapy when they are in pain with a sore shoulder, hip, back, etc., but in the near future people across the nation will be going to PTs for balance treatment. I'm already doing it!

I've seen the suffering caused by severe vertigo, it breeds desperation in people. Unlike just "living with" a sore knee, dizziness affects all aspects of a person's life and can be debilitating. And, also unlike a sore knee which requires multiple visits and a long time to heal, it often only takes one or two visits for someone with vertigo to be cured. It's like a night and day experience for these patients.

I remember a former military patient of mine who had been suffering from benign positional vertigo for over 25 years. One session with me and he was cured – talk about a miracle! He was ecstatic! It truly can be a life changing moment and it really can happen overnight.

The outcomes I've seen at my balance center in Fort Myers are incredible. The vast majority of our patients return to their normal levels of function going through our program.

Physical therapists need to take up the charge and become the leaders in Balance Disorders management— we're in the perfect profession for it! We're the ones in the position to help the most people with this widespread ailment.

And it's not just helping people with vertigo, but also those whose balance is compromised because of Parkinson's, MS, strokes, injuries, neurological disorders, amputation, etc. All these people are at risk for falling, the effects of which can be devastating. But we, as physical therapists, can help them. We're in the business of changing can be devastating. But we, as physical therapists, can help them.

Clinical Perspective

It was 2007. Joanie came into the clinic in a wheelchair. She was unable to stand due to severe dizziness (imbalance, vertigo). She was frightened. She had been suffering from dizziness for over 5 years, eventually making her unable to walk safely. We went through our evaluation process and it was identified she had BPPV+ with severe posterior canal BPPV in the right ear. She reported every time she would lie down, she would get intense vertigo. She started sleeping in a chair at night due to her fear of losing balance and falling. As a result, she also suffered from fatigue as she had not had a good night's rest in almost 5 years.

When we put her down on the table to check for vertigo, she fought us. It took one person to hold her down from the front and another guy to lift her legs off the table so she could not bolt up—she was in such a panic she literally was throwing punches at me in fear to try to get up. We did a classic canalith repositioning maneuver using the Epley technique with my special Werner Pillow designed to assist in the maneuvering of the patient on the table.

When she sat up she stated she felt an immense feeling of calmness—she was shocked how well she felt. After a few minutes she asked if she could stand up on her own. She stood and the feeling of imbalance was gone! She started to cry; she had been suffering for almost 5 years and all it took was a simple maneuver to fix

her. She was able to take a few steps for the first time in five years on her own. She hugged me. She was ecstatic.

Two days later while I was working Joanie strolls in, only this time there was no wheelchair and she was walking on her own without assistance. My eyes started to well up with tears a bit; another success story. This is what being a PT is all about; the success stories and helping people regain their lives. Joanie came up to me and we both cried together. She was so happy, for the first time in 5 years she wasn't dizzy and could walk freely without fear of falling.

After our cry together she asked me if there was anything she could do for me. I said I did not need anything, just her happiness. She pulled out a check and said to me not to go out and buy a Porsche with this – I was unsure what she meant. I opened up the piece of paper and it was a check for \$50,000.00! It was hand written with a lot of zeros! I told her that she did not have to do this and it was really not appropriate for me to take the money. She said then to take it as a donation for the center and do something with it that will help the community of Las Vegas, and so I did. Because of her generosity, I've been able to help even more people with balance disorders. I will never forget Joanie, she will always have a special place in my heart.

Frustrated MD Begs Physical Therapists to Fix Balance Patients

Dr. Daniel Deems is not the typical doctor. He's an otolaryngologist (ENT) with a MD and a PhD. He's a former Chief of Surgery for one of the "Top 50 Rated Hospitals in the U.S."

Every day he witnesses first-hand the devastating effects of people falling.

His mother-in-law was severely injured from a fall; a member of his church took a nasty fall; a family friend fell in his own driveway and died instantly from head trauma. "I'm frustrated because growing

old should not mean falls are inevitable," Deems states. "But, given our current healthcare system, we are not set-up to properly serve those people who need us the most. Older Americans are falling in epidemic proportions."

"Medical doctors are often limited to pharmaceutical and surgical interventions but falling is a functional problem."

"American's are simply not aware that there are steps they can take to decrease falls. Most healthcare professionals are unaware of this as well!"

Most physicians see only one patient at a time, but this one-on-one model is ineffective; physicians are outnumbered. According to the CDC, there were 2.3 million non-fatal falls in 2010! Clearly, the number of patients suffering from balance and dizziness disorders far exceeds the number of doctors that can treat them.

Dr. Deems was astute enough to realize he needed another professional to assist him in treating balance disorder patients, one who was compassionate and trained in the connectivity of the body, because balance is a combination of sensory inputs from the inner ear and vision, strength and endurance, attitudes about activity, and the home environment.

Medical Awakening

Suffering from back, neck, and knee pain from a skiing accident, Dr. Deems experienced a medical awakening when it was a PT who eliminated his pain when no MD could.

Dr. Deems now recognized that physical therapists were the best professionals to treat the biomechanics and the connectivity involved in balance.

Physical therapists are the key to arresting the epidemic of falls in the United States:

- **A person dies every 29 minutes in the U.S. from a preventable fall – only 6 years ago it was every 36 minutes – clearly the problem is getting worse.**
- **On average, the hospitalization cost for a fall injury in the U.S. is \$34,294 (in 2012 dollars).**
- **Those who fall are two to three times more likely to fall again.**
- **53% of older adults who are discharged for fall-related hip fractures will experience another fall within six months.**
- **Of those who fall and sustain injury almost 30% never return to independence.**

Dr. Deems has discovered that joining forces with physical therapists to treat imbalance will lead to a change in how medicine is delivered... forever.

Millions Cured Simultaneously

Driven by a passion to cure millions of people simultaneously, Dr. Deems has collaborated with Brian Werner, PT, to develop a comprehensive balance program for physical therapists to utilize in helping patients.

Werner is recognized as the top balance and dizziness disorders expert in healthcare. He has spent over 15 years treating balance patients and performing clinical studies.

Werner also operates the premiere balance center in America, FYZICAL Therapy and Balance Centers, located in Fort Myers.

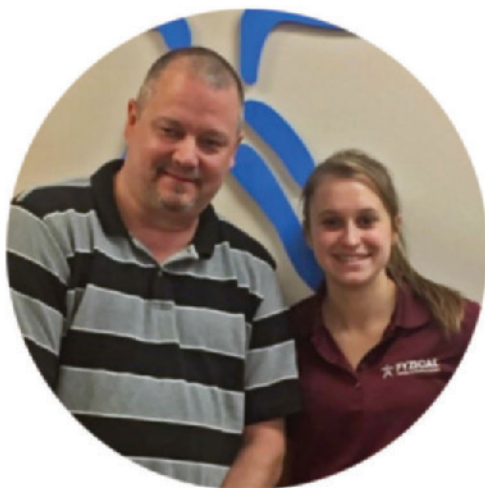
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Most senior citizens don't even realize they have a balance disorder until it's too late – they become one of the statistics.

Balance is one of the biggest unknowns in healthcare, and a tremendous growth opportunity for physical therapists.

Falling is not inevitable. After a fall a patient may get a CAT scan, a prescription for Meclizine, and then handed a walker. What's the plan to prevent the next fall?"

– DANIEL DEEMS



DPT Uses Latest Treatment Protocols to Rehab Ruptured Achilles in Half the Time!

Steve Ennis ruptured his left Achilles tendon on June 10th, 2017, and had it "sewn" back together on June 15th. He then started physical therapy on July 10th; one month after his injury.



Amanda was my physical therapist and she put me through a variety of strengthening and stretching exercises. After two weeks of therapy, my doctor was very impressed with my progress and actually cleared me for a normal shoe - two weeks earlier than originally planned!

My foot is now at +20 degrees. I am walking again and I could not have done it without FYZICAL. Thank you Amanda!

- Steve Ennis



Ennis' physical therapist, Amanda Martin DPT, CSCS, is extremely happy with the results. "Steve made excellent progress, and it was very rewarding to see him succeed the way he did."

Steve's success story is one of thousands. Amanda belongs to a group of forward thinking PTs, FYZICAL, and has access to a robust variety of continuing education programs with the latest treatment protocols.

These programs go well beyond traditional

training, and include much more than the latest protocols and cutting-edge technology for Manual Orthopedic Certification. All members have access to advanced online training, in-person workshops, and many members across the country are hosting their own workshops, for the benefit of the cooperative.

"It has helped me become the therapist I am today, and reinforced my skills to provide patients with the best quality of care to achieve the best possible outcomes," Martin says.

The FYZICAL business model was founded by one of the best business minds in the world, Jim Abrams. Now, the brand is bringing together the brightest clinical minds from across the world.

As a cooperative group sharing resources, FYZICAL's exponential growth enables integration of new experts and exploration of new ways to provide extensive training, certifications, and continuing education to physical therapists across the country.



One of FYZICAL's newest experts focused every day on improving the outcomes in FYZICAL centers is **Dr. Gavin Hammer** PT, DPT, FAAOMPT, Dip. MT (NZ), recently appointed as **FYZICAL's National Director of Orthopedic Education**

"I have been a self-employed educator for a number of years and seeing the FYZICAL model of treatment encouraged me to be part of a greater organization where I can be more effective in providing education, while also growing my knowledge base as well."

Hammer graduated in New Zealand from the Otago School of Physiotherapy in 1979, going on to complete his post-graduate manipulative therapy training in 1991, subsequently awarded the Diploma of Manipulative Therapy (Dip MT), and completed his Doctorate of Physical Therapy in 2012 from Des Moines University-Osteopathic Medical Center. Through reciprocal agreements between New Zealand and the US, Hammer is now a Fellow of the American Academy of Orthopedic Manual Physical Therapists (FAAOMPT), and with his New Zealand background, along with undertaking the Canadian Extremity/Vertebral manual therapy program, he has the experience and background to present an effective, evidence-based methodology

of manual therapy management of musculoskeletal problems. He has also authored two books on syndrome-based management of the lumbar spine and pelvis.

In order to provide additional structure to continuing education, he has developed two series of courses. The 'Certified New Zealand Concept Therapist' (CNZCT) and a specialized hip program, 'Hips for Life'. These courses bring evidence-based practice together with skilled manual therapy and functional exercise to maximize the non-surgical function of the adolescent athlete to the elderly, non-surgical hip pain patients.

Hammer is not the only recent addition to FYZICAL's clinical education team.



Dr. Cynthia Neville PT, DPT, WCS was recently named **FYZICAL's National Director of Pelvic Health and Wellness.**

Neville is a board-certified Women's Health Certified Specialist (WCS). She works with women and men of all ages suffering from pelvic floor disorders including: urinary incontinence, constipation, and pelvic pain. She also specializes in physical therapy for women with problems related to pregnancy and childbearing, like pelvic girdle pain and painful intercourse after delivery.

Neville is an internationally recognized educator and speaker in the clinical practice area of pelvic and women's health and rehabilitation and has trained hundreds of therapists and physicians in pelvic floor examination and treatment, and rehabilitation for pregnancy related musculoskeletal problems.

Before developing FYZICAL's Pelvic Health and Wellness Program, Neville developed Pelvic and Women's Health Rehabilitation Programs at renowned healthcare organizations, including the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago, and Brooks Rehabilitation in Jacksonville, Florida. She is Clinical Faculty member of the University of North Florida in Jacksonville, and guest faculty at Florida Gulf Coast University in Ft. Myers.

Neville has also authored several research articles to contribute to the scientific body of knowledge in this specialized area of clinical care. She has presented her research at national and international meetings

Is Your PT Up To Date With The Latest Treatment Methods?

How can you be sure your treatments are the most up to date, evidence-based protocols?
You could get hurt if not...



A Beautiful "PT" Mind

What does John Nash (played by Russell Crowe in *A Beautiful Mind*) and his Theory on Complex Decision Making have to do with a physical therapy organization?... Everything! John Nash won a Nobel Prize for stating,

"It is not in the best interest of the individual to do what is in only his best interest. It is in the best interest of the individual, to do what is in his best interest AND in the best interest of the group."

Mary Lucas is a 74-year-old retired woman who was diagnosed with scoliosis in the '90s. She has battled with severe pain for many years. At first, her doctors wanted to operate on her but she was determined to seek different options, which led her to physical therapy.



The first physical therapist I met told me I should never exercise standing up or it would make it worse. But I love to walk!

-Mary said.



Imagine what this would be like... not being able to take walks? Suddenly, spine surgery doesn't sound too bad.

What Mary didn't know was her physical therapist was using outdated scoliosis methodologies. Her therapist hadn't continued his education and study in scoliosis treatment, so he was using what he learned 20-30 years prior in school.

Mary continued physical therapy but wasn't seeing much improvement and the outdated therapy she was receiving was actually causing her more harm.

That's when Mary pursued other options for therapy. She did some research of her own and found FYZICAL Therapy & Balance Centers soon after moving to Sarasota, Florida.

"I went to FYZICAL and they said my last physical therapist was outdated treatment methods!" Mary explained. Luckily, her new therapist had recently graduated from physical therapy school and was up-to-date on the most current scoliosis research and training.

Mary continued her treatment with the new therapist and started seeing a significant decrease in pain. She also enjoyed the different forms of treatment, *"I loved how they incorporated water therapy,"* she said. *"I have no pain and I'm not getting any worse as I age."*

Mary has also fully recovered from another injury she experienced three years ago. *"I slipped off a stool and got a compression fracture on my L1 three years ago, and once again, my therapist has strengthened my spine and I've had no problems at all since completing my therapy."*

Mary is lucky she found a physical therapist with an up-to-date education in scoliosis treatments and she continues to enjoy a better quality of life. *"I can do anything and everything I want to do with no pain!"*

So, why is there such an inconsistency with physical therapists?

Unfortunately, many physical therapists don't keep up with the latest research and advancements in treatment methodologies as they progress in their careers. Physical therapists often stick to their specialties and don't continue strengthening their skill sets and researching evidence-based therapy updates.

The new age of education in physical therapy is upon us!

Evidence-based protocols, new equipment, and treatment methods evolve every day. It's nearly impossible for one physical therapist to be an expert in every area. Because of stories like Mary's, FYZICAL recognizes the necessity for continued education in physical therapy in order to help more patients love their lives.

A group of private practice owners, business experts, clinical leaders and trainers are continuously gathering knowledge into a proprietary, all-encompassing platform with the latest and greatest in physical therapy education through an ever-changing FYZICAL College. FYZICAL puts into the hands of every clinician the most up-to-date treatment methodologies for every ailment, and step-by-step processes for not only treating patients, but preventing injury in the first place.

FREE Assessment



The FIRST Step to Quality Healthcare

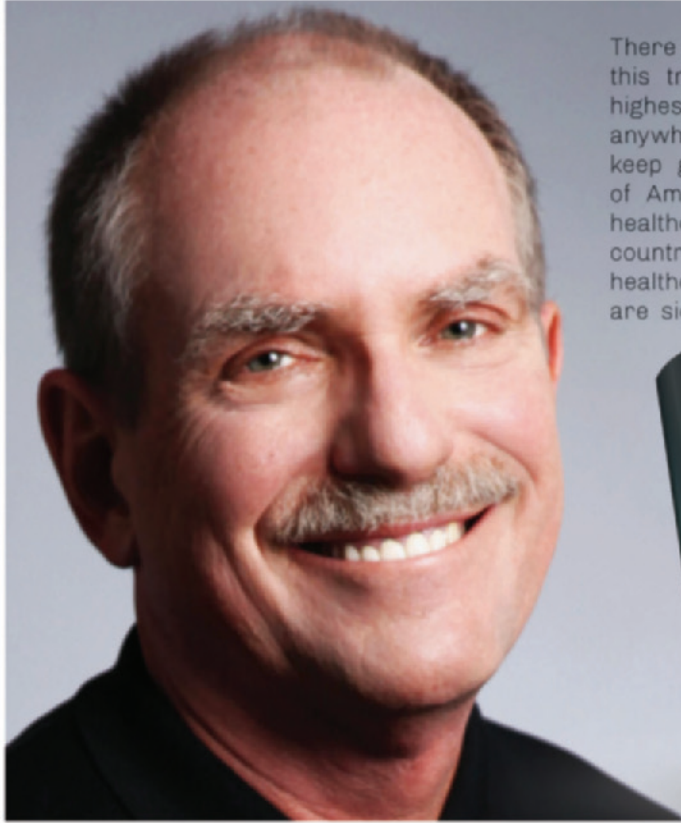
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- Say goodbye to pain and get back to living and loving your life.

www.fyzicalfirst.com

HEALTHCARE IN TRANSFORMATION

By futurist, keynote speaker and world-renowned author David Houle.

Healthcare in the United States has begun a radical transformation. What was, no longer is. What is will soon give way to what will be. Regardless of what politicians may think, say or do, this new transformation will not be stopped. It is perhaps the greatest time of sweeping change in U.S. healthcare history.



There are a number of dynamics driving this transformation. America has the highest per capita cost of healthcare anywhere in the world. The costs keep going up. A larger percentage of Americans do not have access to healthcare than any other developed country in the world. We have considered healthcare something we need when we are sick, injured or confronted with a



disease. We wait until there is a problem and then we interface with the healthcare system to fix our problem. That is why costs are going up and people are struggling with poor health.

In a book I co-authored, "*The New Health Age: The Future of Healthcare in America*", published in 2012, the future of our healthcare system was summarized by nine dynamic flows. These nine flows were divided by how we think about healthcare, the delivery of healthcare and the economics of health care. These nine flows, shown below, are the underpinnings of the transformation now occurring. As you look at these flows, keep in mind that we are moving from the left side to the right side. Practices, businesses and all healthcare related entities will be moving to the right side of these flows.



How We Think About Healthcare

- Sickness > Wellness
- Ignorance > Awareness
Understanding
- Supplier Driven > Payer Driven



How We Deliver Healthcare

- Treatment > Prevention
- Reactivate > Proactivate
- Episodic > Wholistic



The Economics of Healthcare

- Procedures > Performance
- Isolation > Integration
- Non-Efficient > Efficient

These nine dynamic flows are the underpinnings of change today. They are also creating new institutions and entities as a result. The old institutional model was simple. First the doctor, followed by the hospital, then recovery and rehab. When the healthcare transformation was triggered by the ACA legislation, the old models thought the way to prepare was to consolidate. Hospitals merged with other hospitals, physician practices were bought, sold and merged. The problem with this was that scale alone was not an answer when the fundamentals are changing. Merged hospital and practice groups were still operating the same way but had just scaled up so the only benefit was back office efficiencies.

A significant part of the New Health Age is the development of new entities that are created and organized around some or all of the nine dynamic flows. An example of this is the recent announced merger of CVS and Aetna [which, as of time of writing this column, has yet to be approved]. This

is an integration that reflects at least six of the flows.

It occurred to me as I was preparing for a keynote speech to some 2,500 pharmacists several years ago, that they were the most trusted and most frequent touch points of the healthcare system. Think about how often you interface with your pharmacist relative to your doctor or surgeon. So, it makes great sense that combining pharmacists with an insurer will promote integration, efficiency, prevention, wellness and understanding.

Another type of entity that will inevitably be very successful are what can loosely be called wellness practices that are about wellness, prevention, proactivity, and awareness. These entities will be expansions of existing ones that add on services to focus on these qualities.

I have always thought physical therapy practices would be ideal for the New

Health Age if they expanded their practice and offerings. The old thinking was that PT was for recovery from an accident or surgery. The new thinking is that PT can be a source of prevention and understanding. A good percentage of accidents or necessary surgeries

[Continued on next page...](#)

are a result of non-aware poor health practices. Highly paid superstar athletes are always working with the trainer and physical therapists on a daily basis, not just for injury recovery. Have you ever truly watched how much warm-up and stretching NBA and NFL players do before a game? Much more than any of the rest of us. They know that being of good health and injury-free takes a great amount of conditioning, preparation, nutrition and prevention.

That is why I think that such companies as FYZICAL are perfectly positioned for the current transformation. Preventative physical therapy to find out the weak, inflexible and out of alignment aspects of one's body will lower injuries and surgeries. I particularly am impressed with their developing "balance practice".

I remember when my parents were living in a truly superior retirement community that had all levels of living, the one thing they feared most was falling. In the decade they lived there before their deaths, they lost a number of friends whose health rapidly deteriorated after a fall. Both my parents started to use walkers as a prevention against falls. With the aging of the Baby Boomer generation, any offered balance practice should have great appeal.

healthcare system. We are moving toward a much more preventative system that is based upon prevention.

As a futurist, I am always making forecasts. Back in August 2012 [<https://davidhoule.com/forecasts>], I forecast that,

"Health care will be called health management by 2020"

We have entered a new era of healthcare when active, informed prevention will take on an ever-greater part in our healthcare system. We will still always need treatment for a variety of maladies but an ever-greater part of how we think about and how we pay for good health will come from active prevention practices.

In this new preventative system, as the apple quote above suggests, better eating habits and better nutrition will be integral to better health. Several well-known doctors have firmly stated that the more we focus on what we eat and our nutrition, the less drugs and treatments we will need through life. We will increasingly move away from the reality of "big food" getting us sick so that we need the drugs from "big pharma". That old adage from 50 years ago "you are what you eat" will now become part of the structured preventative healthcare system.

FYZICAL and many other entities that are embracing many of the nine dynamic flows will be the emerging health centers of the future. Remember we are moving from "healthcare" to "health management". It will be necessary for all of us to find those we trust to help us better manage our health so we won't get sick, injured or develop a chronic condition.

If companies such as FYZICAL also expand into the areas of nutrition, diet and fitness counseling, they will be filling a gap that the old system had and an essential one in the New Health Age.

Welcome to the New Health Age!

On a personal level the key flows are: wellness, prevention and proactive.

Anyone reading this column has probably heard the proverbial phrases,

"An apple a day keeps the doctor away"

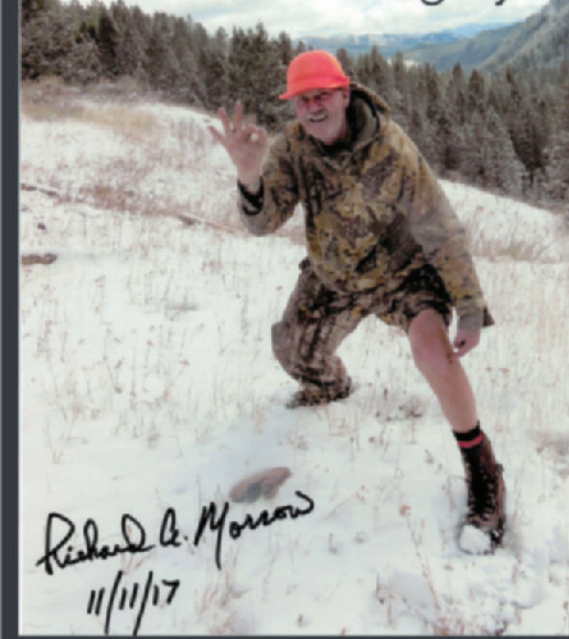
and

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure."

Americans have had a "pound of cure"

74-Year-Old Climbs 8,000 Ft Mountain...

After Knee Surgery





We all know someone who loves to be outside and just enjoy Mother Nature. Whether they are hiking, fishing, biking, or horseback riding, they always prefer the great outdoors. Richard Morrow, a 74-year-old Florida "snowbird," originally from Michigan, fits this description to a T.

Richard was scheduled to go to the Elk Hunting Camp in Wyoming this past fall for a vacation.... but he suffered a fall, and it was looking like he'd have to cancel the trip.

It was early 2017 while taking a walk on the beach in Michigan. Richard was walking the jetty when his foot slipped and got caught between rocks, causing him to slip and fall.

This fall resulted in a Lateral and Medial Meniscus Tear in his left knee, leading to surgery a few days later. After surgery, his doctor told him he would need physical therapy, referring him to FYZICAL in St. Petersburg, FL.

He was greeted by Tricia Trinke and her team, led by clinical director, Tonya McLean.

Richard immediately told them he was going to Wyoming in October for a big hunting trip and needed to be able to hike up an 8,000-foot mountain in the snow to hunt with his friends. This would be a challenging feat for anyone, never mind a 74-year-old who just underwent knee surgery!

Tonya and her staff told Richard they could help him accomplish his goal and developed his plan of care. He needed two months of physical therapy to develop the strength necessary to handle the grueling, unsteady terrain he would experience during his trip. At the end of his physical therapy, Tonya told Richard she thought he would be able to handle the terrain on his hunting trip and Richard was ecstatic!



Words cannot adequately describe my elation for the medical skills and professionalism enamored on me by, Dr. Menon, his surgical team and FYZICAL. I was able to climb multiple mountains during this hunt with a completely rehabilitated knee for which I am eternally grateful. THANK YOU one and all."

-Richard Morrow



Physical therapists like Tonya and her team are helping patients every day live longer, healthier lives and return to the activities they love. What an amazing profession to be a part of!



105-Year-Old dances with his wife for FIRST time in 33 YEARS... in a PT clinic!

This is Gus and his lovely wife dancing together after 33 YEARS of being unable to do so.

They're in a balance therapy clinic in Sarasota, FL, where they have rekindled their romance with Spanish Eyes playing in the background.

You see... Gus is a pretty amazing dude.

He currently owns **2 Guinness World Records**



1. Oldest active living member of the PGA
2. Oldest person to ever hit a hole-in-one (103 years old)

At his age, Gus wanted two things in life: 1) To play golf every week and 2) To dance with his wife.

In their younger years, they would golf together and finish their evenings dancing at the local club until it closed. But, now, it was dangerous for the two of them to dance together due to fear of falling... which can be devastating at their age.

The majority of people would probably tell

him.... Well Gus, you're ONE...HUNDRED... AND...FIVE. Your golfing days are over... and your dancing days? Yeah, those too.

But Gus wasn't done doing the things he loved.

He saw an ENT for a routine ear issue, which led to a referral to a FYZICAL balance center, where Gus could work on his balance with the hope of continued independent living.

After an initial evaluation and short period of treatment (4 visits!), today, Gus is back to playing golf every week.

As for the dancing... during his last balance therapy session, Kristin, his physical therapist, asked Gus if he wanted to dance with his wife.

Since Gus was the last patient of the day, they had the floor to themselves, and Spanish Eyes (the same song they danced to at their wedding) was playing over the speakers.

They started to dance and she started to

sing to him... the entire staff watched in heartfelt amazement as they shared their first dance in 33 years.

"This is why I became a physical therapist. To have this kind of impact on people's lives. It is so rewarding to see and be a part of. These fall risk patients typically have nowhere to go for balance therapy, but with FYZICAL's balance program, we're helping patients across the country get back to independent living.

Patients' expectations from doctors have changed. They have higher desire for quality of life and are less willing to let age defy their goals. Simply ruling out major illness and reassuring them is not sufficient.

We've changed our mindset to accommodate these desires and incorporate a more preventative approach, stopping falls and improving quality of life. Being proactive towards health, rather than reactive to illness. Patients today want holistic, comprehensive care."



At 97 years old, Mike Danzinger could not walk on his own. But Mike is a fighter.

He's also a survivor: Growing up in the Warsaw ghetto in Poland, he lost his entire family at Treblinka Concentration Camp during the Holocaust.

“*I'm from a family of eight, six brothers and two sisters. None of them left. I escaped from Warsaw when I was 17... only to be captured, and I wound up in Russia.*”
-said Danzinger.

After the war, he came to the U.S. and got married to his lovely wife Sarah. Sixty-seven years later, they count their blessings — with five daughters, 12 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

“An illness last year left him very weak. He was in a wheelchair, and it was difficult, really difficult,” according to his wife Sarah. He recently received an invitation to his granddaughter's wedding in Chicago. It was at this point, Mike realized it was time to get help, so he could dance at the wedding.

His strength suffered, but his spirit was strong... and he started working with physical therapist Alex Matz, at FYZICAL Therapy and Balance Centers in Miami Beach.

10 Successful Outcomes

97 year-old Holocaust Survivor Starts PT with One Goal in Mind: To Dance at His Granddaughter's Wedding

From July to December, three days a week, Mike worked very hard on strength and balance.

“*We all knew exactly what our goal was. Every single day, the reason he came here. He never missed a session.*”

- Alex Matz, Mike's physical therapist.

“*Alex promised me I'd be ready for the wedding and I will dance, and I said, 'We'll see!'*”

When the big day came, the months of therapy paid off. Mike said, “I was dancing with my wife. Whoever wanted, they all wanted to dance with me!”

And, with his newfound strength, Mike stood strong and also sang blessings to the newlyweds. There wasn't a dry eye in the house.

After the wedding, Mike didn't stop his therapy with another granddaughter's wedding just a few weeks away and Mike wants to be sure he can cut the rug with his family once again!

“He has a fan club. It's so easy to fall in love with him,” says physical therapist Matz. Mike says he'll continue doing therapy, not just for his next family wedding, but because it makes him feel good.

This is one of a million successful outcome miracles physical therapists around the country are making happen every day!

Neither Amputation, Brain Injury, nor Loss of Balance Could Stop this Courageous War Veteran from Winning the Gold

Air Force Master Sgt. Christopher Aguilera overcame severe injuries and loss of limb from a deadly helicopter crash during a combat rescue mission in Afghanistan to eventually take home multiple medals from the Warrior and Invictus games in 2014.

“It is the biggest honor I’ve ever had,” states Aguilera. “To be able to represent the Air Force and my country in the Invictus Games in London, and to be a part of the first one ever, is a tremendous honor.”

It’s also quite an accomplishment considering the severe injuries he sustained in 2010 while serving in Afghanistan. Aguilera, a Master Sgt. with the 66th Rescue Squadron stationed at Nellis Air Force Base, Nevada, was part of a team that conducted combat search and rescue missions in Afghanistan.

“It was June ninth” recalls Aguilera. “Before the sun came up we already had two combat rescues under our belt. Under the cover of night, it’s pretty easy to go in and scoop up soldiers and do our mission because we’re cloaked and the enemy can’t see us, but we can easily see them with our night vision goggles. So, the first two missions went off without a hitch.”

During their third mission, however, their helicopter was shot down

while Aguilera and his crewmates were rescuing an injured soldier. “The shot took out our tail rotor and we ended up spinning uncontrollably. We had to distance ourselves from the FOB (Forward Operating Base) so as not to injure any of our brothers, and then we were over some civilian houses so we had to hold out a little bit longer to find a clear patch of ground. Ultimately, we impacted the ground from 150 feet in the air and 120 Mach force.”

Four of Aguilera’s crewmates died upon impact and he was trapped underneath the fiery remains of the aircraft’s fuselage. His injuries were extensive: back broken in 5 spots, broken ankle, femur, ribs, jaw, collarbone, severe burns, and traumatic brain injury. His recovery included over 21 surgeries and 5 months in the hospital.

“It was one of the toughest moments of my life,” states Aguilera. “I just wanted to die. The doctors didn’t know if I would ever be able to walk

again. But being around other vets who had severe injuries as well, I realized I had nothing to cry about. Eventually, I realized I am going to die someday, but not today; and when I do join my brothers in the ground, I want them to be proud of me for the life I lived.”

This was one of the reasons why Aguilera wanted to become active again as soon as possible. Not only to participate in sports and compete athletically, but also so he could go on one last deployment. “I didn’t want that mission to be my last,” he states. “So, after a year of recovery and training, I was able to get my job back and get my combat status mission back and get back to combat rescue and saving lives. So after 21 years in the military, my last deployment was to Africa to set up the first combat rescue operation there. It was a very successful mission and the operations are still going on there. It was one of the best moments of my military career, and I’m happy to say it was my last one.”



“If it wasn’t for Steve (Hurtado) at FYZICAL, I don’t know where I would be right now, and I definitely wouldn’t have all of these gold medals from last year and all of the success that I had if it wasn’t for him. There was a lot of trial and error but the PTs at FYZICAL just kept at it and eventually narrowed it down. They helped me out so much—it’s just unbelievable.”
- MASTER SGT. CHRISTOPHER AGUILERA

After his final deployment, Aguilera was able to start training for the Warrior Games in Colorado Springs and the Invictus Games in London. "The Warrior Games are like the Olympics for wounded and injured service members and veterans of the military," explains Aguilera. The Invictus Games, held for the very first time in 2014 in London, brought together servicemen and women from 14 nations to compete in athletic games.

"Although I could run just fine, I was having huge problems with balance," Aguilera states. "Because I only have two toes on my right foot and what's left of my right leg is severely damaged, and I've lost my left lower leg, my balance is completely gone. Also, what I didn't know at the time was that because of my brain injury, I was having trouble with my vestibular system. If I was standing or reaching for something over my head, I would start to fall forward. It was pretty embarrassing because I didn't know what the heck was going on."

Aguilera went to see the doctors at Nellis AFB about his balance problems, but they were unable to help him. "They never really worked with anybody like me before or seen the balance problems I had. They just weren't equipped to deal with someone like me."

"So that's why I went to FYZICAL Therapy & Balance Centers and thank God I did!" exclaims Aguilera.

The FYZICAL Therapy & Balance Center is a 5,000 square foot state-of-the-art balance center with some of the world's most renowned balance experts and cutting edge programs. It is the result of 15 years of research and numerous clinical trials. It redefines balance and vestibular care and is one the leading, if not the top, balance programs in the nation. FYZICAL's stellar balance programs are also offered in many of their locations across the U.S., making those practice owners *the* balance experts in their community.

“ There are millions of people in America with vestibular, balance, and dizziness disorders that many doctors simply don't know how to heal,” states ENT specialist, Dr. Dan Deems, MD, PhD. “Those patients have given up on ever being cured and feel their lives are over. At FYZICAL, we are showing PTs how to simply deliver sophisticated balance therapy which allows people to get their lives back.”

– DR. DAN DEEMS, MD, PhD



“Eventually, I realized I am going to die someday, but not today; and when I do join my brothers in the ground, I want them to be proud of me for the life I lived.”

– MASTER SGT. CHRISTOPHER AGUILERA

Master Sgt. Aguilera goes on to say, “If it wasn’t for Steve (Hurtado) at FYZICAL, I don’t know where I would be right now, and I definitely wouldn’t have all of these gold medals from last year and all of the success I’ve had if it wasn’t for him. There was a lot of trial and error but the PTs at FYZICAL just kept at it and eventually narrowed it down. They helped me out so much—it’s just unbelievable.

“Steve was also helping me with my spin technique — he just broke it down for me so I could spin and throw a discus without falling off balance, which is pretty amazing. I was able to walk away with several gold, silver, and bronze medals from both games. He’s an amazing guy and I love him... I’ll definitely go back and have him help me with that every time I train for these games,” states Aguilera.

For the record, Aguilera won the Gold in discus throwing, Silver in the 1500 meter sprint, and Bronze in the shot put at the Warrior Games. He won Silver medals in the 1500 meter sprint and wheelchair basketball at the Invictus Games. He was one of only 40 servicemen chosen to represent the U.S. in the Invictus Games. In addition to Steve, Aguilera also credits trainers Chad Cole and Melissa Batterman for helping him train. “I call them my Triad; they’re all there helping me get to where I need to go.”

As for the future, Aguilera hopes to continue to be a part of the Warrior and Invictus games. “I hope to make the team every time,” he states. “I’m going to continue to work on my balance and train and when the selection camp comes around, go out there and give it 100%. Even if I don’t get selected, I’ll go out there and give it my all and break my personal records. I’ll be happy with that.” **so**



Clinical Perspective

When I first met Christopher Aguilera in early February of 2014, he had just started his balance/dizziness therapy with us. He was dealing with numerous challenges from a history of concussions, trauma from a helicopter crash, and a recent below the knee amputation. After our first session together, I felt a little overwhelmed as he presented with such a low tolerance to body, head, and eye movements and required extended rest breaks. Not only was Chris unable to tolerate the exercises we needed him to perform in therapy and at home, he was also having a very tough time with simple activities of daily living. Driving, reading, watching TV/movies, shopping, and sometimes just talking to people was making him quite sick and nauseated. Chris would often need to sit still in a relatively quiet corner of the clinic after just a few minutes of vestibular/visual balance exercises. Through it all, Chris showed he had big heart and a steely determination to get better. Somehow, he was able to trust me and the rest of the FYZICAL staff that the therapy exercises we were doing, though tough-going, were going to help him. I clearly remember how even though Chris looked like he was about to pass out from his symptoms, he always found kind words of encouragement for other patients in the clinic.

After a few weeks of therapy, Chris commented he was very happy to be able to perform 5 burpees in his CrossFit workout. I could see a light in his eyes like maybe this will work and soon found myself having to slow him down during therapy often insisting he take breaks. He was still having very strong symptoms but was now ready

and able to push himself through the nausea and dizziness. A couple of weeks later, he was able to perform 10 burpees, and more and more we were able to use our proprietary methodology for him to trick his brain into accepting some vestibular challenges while he continued to struggle with complex visual patterns, rapid head turns/tilts, and busy noise environments.

In the summer of 2014, Chris told me he was working with a coach and learning to throw the discus and wanted to compete. I told him I would be glad to work on his mechanics and any vestibular challenges he would have. I laugh about it now because it was so crazy and he was so determined to do this! He could still barely turn his head quickly without significant disequilibrium, several seconds of visual blur, and he was spinning on his prosthetic leg which was built for jogging not turning. Easy, right?

After a few more weeks of very hard work with countless dizzying spins, variations of head tilts, spotting techniques, and adjustments to his prosthetic, Chris found the right combination to win Gold in the Warrior Games. I must say, it was an honor and very humbling, as well as an uplifting, experience to work with Chris. He has been such a great example for all of us here at FYZICAL with his hard work, determination, and big heart, always willing to help lift up others even while his own situation seemed so dismal at times. Chris gave so much serving his country and he continues to inspire with his desire to reach far beyond his apparent limitations. Once again, thanks Chris. LYL. – **Steve Hurtado**

Go to www.fyzicalswfl.com/ to find more stories like this and more on our expert physical therapists.

Spinning Out of Control

With his life in complete upheaval due to a condition doctors couldn't identify, boxer Eric Gonzalez finally finds relief with physical therapy

“Everything was spinning; I couldn't function, states Eric Gonzalez. “The dizziness I felt was debilitating and affecting all areas of my life. I just felt so much despair.” Gonzalez was suffering from an extreme balance disorder, only he didn't know it at the time. In his youth, and into adulthood, he loved doing contact sports like boxing, football, and motocross. “When you're into those types of activities, you do bang your head a lot,” he says, “but when you're young you don't think about it; you get up and if you feel OK you keep going.” But two years ago, when Gonzalez was in his late twenties, he had a motocross accident where he hit his head and blacked out. It was around that time when he first starting experiencing the symptoms of his balance disorder.

“It was a pretty bad accident,” he recalls, “I landed on my head and banged it pretty hard, even though I was wearing a helmet. And this time, the dizziness didn't go away. Usually by the end of the day or the next morning it would have gone away, but it stuck with me and I felt I was slurring my words and not making any sense.” Still, Gonzalez managed to live with these symptoms – for a while. There would be some days where nothing would happen, and others where his balance was really off. “There would be times when I would get up, completely lose my balance and shoulder block the wall, and I would think it was funny; I didn't really pay too much attention to it, but after a while, everything started to get worse.” Soon, simple tasks like shampooing his hair, watching television, and even driving in his car became difficult for him to perform.

“I was a complete mess; I had zero balance...and if I closed my eyes, I lost all sense of orientation. I would get anxiety before going to sleep because waking up in the morning was so terrible; as soon as I opened my eyes, my bedroom would be doing somersaults and I would dry heave



and couldn't get to the bathroom without help... it was horrible.” Gonzalez suffered these balance disorder symptoms for several years in silence. “I didn't tell my wife or my family. I just kept it hidden... waiting for it to go away, but it never did.” He thought he could handle the symptoms and live with them, but they were beginning to affect all areas of his life.

With his symptoms getting progressively worse, an incident at his job made Gonzalez realize he couldn't keep it hidden any longer. He recalls, “I was having an important discussion with my boss, and right in the middle of it, I forgot the entire conversation... I asked him what he was talking about, and then I started to feel really sick, really lightheaded, and then I was out. I had passed out right there on the floor.” It was then that Gonzalez knew he had to seek medical help for his condition and find out what was wrong with him. Getting a diagnosis, however, proved to be a frustrating and challenging endeavor.

“I went to every kind of doctor I could think of, but nobody could actually tell me what was wrong,” he states. “I didn't know what was happening to me and I was just scared! I'd sit in the waiting room of a

doctor's office for 30 minutes, they'd see me for 5 minutes, and then say ‘Sorry, I can't help you.’ It was very frustrating.”

Finally, after visiting six different doctors, Gonzalez went to see Dr. Lomax, an ear, nose, and throat specialist. “He ran some tests and I'll never forget his words,” he recalls, “Dr. Lomax said to me, ‘There's something definitely wrong with you, but I don't exactly know what it is,’ and I just started getting emotional, tears welled up in my eyes, and I said to him, ‘But, you were my last hope.’ I felt weak and was starting to despair. But then he said to me, ‘Look, I can't help you, but I think I know who can. I'll make you an appointment.’”

After seeing so many doctors already and not getting any closer to an answer, Gonzalez didn't get his hopes up. But he wasn't about to quit trying. So, the next morning his wife dropped him off at FYZICAL Therapy & Balance Centers in Las Vegas, where Dr. Lomax told him to go.

FYZICAL Therapy & Balance Center in Fort Myers is a 5,000 square foot state-of-the-art balance center with some of the world's most renowned balance experts and cutting edge programs. It is the result of 15 years of evidence-based clinical medicine. It redefines balance and vestibular care and is one of the leading, if not the top, balance programs in the nation.

That's where Gonzalez met Brian Werner, PT, the clinical director of the center, and Steve Hurtado, PTA, who he would work closely with during his therapy. “Brian Werner was very reassuring and just a kind soul and he made me feel at ease,” explains Gonzalez. “When I first got there, they did some tests on me to try to bring on my symptoms, and, boy, they came on strong!” By bringing on his symptoms, Werner and his team were able to figure out what was wrong with Gonzalez.



Steve Hurtado, PTA

I took a circuitous path to becoming a PTA; in the early 90s, I had studied Film and Digital Animation and after several years of working in NY, I found myself unfulfilled and unhappy. I didn't feel that I was contributing to society in any meaningful way and after 9/11 I knew I had to make a change. I also knew I wanted the stability of a medical career and was considering becoming an EMT/Firefighter as well as enlisting in the military to pursue a career in Combat Rescue. Soon, I was working as a technician at an ortho PT clinic in the

afternoons while also working as a personal trainer at a gym in the mornings. Hours were long, but I loved every minute of it and just enjoyed taking in all of the experience and knowledge. I decided to go into Physical Therapy after taking a few prerequisite courses at a local community college in southern NY. I finished my Physical Therapist Assistant program at Florida State College at Jacksonville. I've always been impressed by the positive ways physical therapy can change lives with just minimal adjustments in form and technique. With even basic exercises

and treatments, people's lives can be transformed. I also saw that similar small tweaks and fine tuning to an athlete's form can make huge differences in performance, and from the beginning of my career I have wanted to help make people faster, stronger, and better. I've worked with Brian Werner and his Balance Center since 2011, and since aligning with FYZICAL, I can see that the possibilities for helping people with balance disorders are endless because our vision is so much bigger now and the team of experts working with us is amazing.

"I never thought I'd be happy to have a diagnosis, but I was so happy to finally have one and thought to myself, 'Now, I can move forward.'"

Although Gonzalez finally had a diagnosis, it was still a very difficult time for him. "I remember as I was hanging from a harness tied up to the roof on that first day at FYZICAL, I couldn't help but think, 'What happened to me?! I'm an athlete! I've been at the top of every sport I've ever done; I've excelled in all things... and now look at me, I'm hanging from a harness. How did I get here?'" Gonzalez asked those same questions of Steve and Brian and they were straight with him; they told him he had had brain trauma.

"I responded, 'No, I haven't!' Gonzalez laughs, "But they told me like it is. I listened to everything they said because they were the ones who finally diagnosed me and right after that, they stated, 'here's how we're going to fix it.' Honestly, there was nothing more reassuring than that; it felt good."

The physical therapy sessions Gonzalez underwent started off with simple tasks, such as reaching down and picking things up, walking on uneven flooring, and walking in the safety overhead support system (S.O.S). "During that first session," he states, "I was a complete mess. I was hanging in the S.O.S. like a rag doll. Any movement, any at all, if it was sudden, and my body would give out, and if I turned too quickly to look at something, the whole room would spin... I must have looked like a lost cause. Steve (Hurtado) and I built up a rapport very quickly; he knew I would work hard and he really knew how to get me moving. We just meshed and worked

“ I’m just so thankful for Steve and Brian who worked with me. They got me back to myself again. I will forever be indebted to them... my wife and I speak about it to this day.” – ERIC GONZALEZ

really well together. After that first session, he became my biggest fan because he knew I was going to push as hard as I could to get back to 100%."

Though the physical therapy tasks sound simple enough, they were far from easy for Gonzalez in the beginning. He explains, "It was really tough at first, but every day I'd be able to accomplish things I wasn't able to do before. I knew things were going in the right direction."


Sure enough, little by little Gonzalez started to feel better every day: "Every morning I didn't feel as sick and after each session I felt more in control. I was able to focus better; I was able to do things like watch TV. I was really starting to feel more like myself again. After a couple of months, I went to the gym where I train and told my trainer what was going on. He told me to take it easy, and, of course, I was going to avoid any shots to the head. I got on the mat and it was a great day! I worked up a sweat, I was there with my brothers, and it was just great."

After five months of therapy, Gonzalez was back to his former self again, only better, according to him. "I haven't felt like this in I don't know how long! I tell Steve and Brian all the time that this is

really a life changer! I feel fresh, there's no cloud. I'm back at work now and things couldn't be more terrific. In fact, I've excelled more and performed better this past year than I ever did in 10 years with this company! My coworkers are happy to have me back. They tell me I look different, my face is different, my attitude is different, I'm funny again; humor is important to me and I did lose that for a time. I feel brand new – it's amazing!"

Gonzalez no longer boxes, but as it's his passion, he's still very much involved in the sport. "I help a lot of fighters get ready for fights. I've been in a lot of training camps and help out. My best friend just had his first pro fight and I was able to help him throughout his training."

"It's just not worth it," Gonzalez says of doing contact sports, "after what I went through and how horrible I felt. But now, I'm at 110%. I'm just so thankful for Dr. Lomax, who recommended FYZICAL Therapy & Balance Centers to me, and for Steve and Brian who worked with me. They got me back to myself again. I will forever be indebted to them... my wife and I speak about it to this day."

Gonzalez still remains in touch with Steve and Brian and sometimes stops into the center to say hi. "I was just talking to Steve who asked how things are going, and I was happy to share with him recently that my wife and I are expecting our first child. I don't think I'll ever be able to separate myself from the folks at FYZICAL," Gonzalez states. "I am always thinking about them and how they helped me; I'm back to where I'm supposed to be and I will be forever extremely thankful to them. They changed my life." 

>MEDICAL FOCUS

By Daniel Deems, M.D., Ph.D., FACS

FINDING BALANCE

One of the most important aspects of health care for 90 million Americans of all ages is **balance evaluation and fall prevention**. But there's a difference between just having a program and being on the cutting edge. How effective is your program?

A 48-year-old woman trips over a parking block and hurts her ankle. After recovery, unaware that the muscle strength in the leg has been affected, she falls while stepping out of the shower, hitting her head and causing a severe injury.

A grandfather unsteadily makes his way to the dinner table at Thanksgiving, his family pulling furniture out of the way to help him. He has been going to the doctor for the last month for another problem. But nobody at the clinic has asked him why he uses a cane and who prescribed it, or determined what kind of rehabilitation is needed to get him back on his own two feet.

A 42-year-old doctor who spends a lot of time on his feet every day performing surgeries finds that he has a shooting pain in his neck and lower back. He does not want to take pain medication, but what other choices does he have?

Those are just three examples of a problem, symptomatic vestibular dysfunction, that affects 90 million Americans each year.

Imbalance!

Are you among the 300 million patients with narcotic prescriptions written annually in the United States?

Narcotics, even in accepted, prescribed doses, often cause unsteadiness and

increase the risk of falls.

Do you or someone you know have Parkinson's disease, diabetes, low blood pressure or have they suffered from heart failure? What about joint replacement or other surgery recently? Just get out of the hospital? All these things are likely to cause an imbalance that can lead to falls. For

patients over 75, imbalance is the

No. 1 reason for a visit to the doctor, and poor balance in the elderly increases the chances of fracture(s) when there is a fall.

One-half of all people over the age of 80 will fall in the next year.

The average medical doctor sees his or her patients while they are sitting down and may never become aware of an imbalance. But physical therapists see their patients in motion and can detect gait and balance problems then develop a plan to create remarkable changes.

The problem is compounded by a lack of awareness of imbalance, such as in two of the three examples above. Imbalance is often an unrecognized problem because it is camouflaged by a more obvious medical condition. But that lack of awareness of the condition can be dangerous and have significant

medical implications.

Physical therapists are critical in the diagnosis and treatment of imbalance. They are the eyes of the world, and no one is better equipped to deal with this condition.

It all starts with an assessment and what kinds of imbalances and instability are affecting the patient. One of the most difficult things to witness is a person who is walking un-steadily, in danger of falling, and clearly not confident that they can make it to their destination safely.

For many of those people, losing their ability to make it from Point A to Point B also means losing their independence, which can be one of the most disheartening prospects they can face.

Therapists I've talked to are all dedicated to healing people and helping clients improve their mobility. A majority of physical therapists have some balance and fall prevention programs, especially in markets that have a large senior population. But the quality of these programs varies widely. Do you incorporate aquatic therapy to work on balance retraining? Do you use a full systems approach to improve balance, with vision in addition to vestibular and proprioceptive components?

Right now, there are 90 million people out there who want to stop falls before they happen. They want to prevent the pain and suffering, the loss of independence, the medical care and surgeries that can be avoided.

Talk to your doctor to find out how you can *Fight the Fall* and start loving life again.

FIGHT THE FALL



Concussions: Replacing Fear with Knowledge

What Parents of Athletes Need to Know



Concussions, as a conversation, must transition from one of fear to education. A 2015 Harris Poll survey of 2,012 Americans, on behalf of the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center¹¹, found that 32% of parents “live in fear” their child will sustain a concussion. In fact, 1 in 4 of those parents restrict their children from participating in sports, due to this fear.

These fearful parents may inadvertently grow overweight, couch-ridden, video-gaming children, who never learn the value of what it means to rely on, or be relied upon by, one’s teammates. Other parents may remain fearful, nevertheless allowing participation, trusting in faith, fate, or fortune.

Let us begin by addressing prevention of injury. When we take our young athletes shopping for sports equipment, we must understand how to properly fit helmets and other personal protective equipment. “Oh, he/she can grow into it.” This is not how we should “fit” our children, when seeking to prevent brain injury. In today’s digital age, we are comparing ball cap sizes to online head size measurements and hoping what arrives is the right fit.

Where can I find help?

Ask an expert. Physical therapists are experts in human physiology. “Our understanding of the human body, and what it takes to protect the body, is what makes us the right consults for properly fitting helmets and other sports equipment,” says Brian Werner, physical therapist. “Too much space in a helmet defeats the purpose; a one-inch gap allows for a huge amount of force to impact the skull,” Werner adds.

Now that we have efficaciously wrapped our athletes in space-aged plastics and Kevlar-lined padding, are we ready to send them off with “Coach Mike,” little Johnny’s Dad who spends the better half of his day in a cubicle? – Not yet. Before we juggle the folding camp chairs, Gatorade, and orange slices, there are a few precautions we can, and must take.

We must first endure the annual sports physical. Let’s assume we all agree our children should have a once-over by their pediatrician or family doctor. Heart conditions, breathing issues, blood sugar levels, skin conditions, and allergies are just the tip of the iceberg.

What about concussions?

In regards to concussions, parents of contact sports athletes (competitive basket weaving might classify as a contact sport these days) should look just a bit further than a simple sports physical. There are peer reviewed, scientifically verified, statistically significant, data which explain the importance of concussion baseline testing.



Brian K. Werner, PT, MPT, FYZICAL's National Balance Director, specializes in concussions and vestibular balance therapy. Werner tells us, "Because each concussion is unique, it is paramount to compare apples to apples when assessing an athlete. Baseline concussion testing is important because, comparing post-injury scores of the athlete or individual to his/her own baseline test before the concussion, is considered best practice (medical terminology for what we are supposed to do). Without it, we can only compare to the general public, which can challenge the treatment of the individual and successful return to activities."

Speaking of the "general public," Werner cites some of those fear-producing statistics on concussions:

- Majority of Traumatic Brain Injuries (TBI) are mTBI or concussions (75-85%)
- Annual rate of mTBI is 130-546 per 100,000 persons
- About 75% of the estimated 1.7 million traumatic brain injuries sustained by Americans annually—from causes ranging from sports injuries to car accidents and falls—are concussions or other forms of mild traumatic brain injury (mTBI)²¹
- Approximately 300,000 sports-related concussions occur in the United States every year
- Public health has an estimated annual cost (direct and indirect) of \$14.5 billion in U.S.

After hearing all the risks, many of us continue to support our young stars and we are off to the fields, courts, rinks, rings, and pools -- lump in our throat, ever-present. But, sports can be great for our children. Sports help build confidence, self-esteem, social skills, increase physical activity, and can even motivate to set goals and learn the value of practice.

What if our worst fears are realized and our child takes a blow to the head? Do we know what to do? Many won't, but we do; thanks to concussion baseline testing.

There is a little room for faith here; when we must trust in our preparations, league support of safe play, good coaching, and qualified medical personnel. If our child is ever hurt on the field, we'll know what to do; providing courage and patience, as we navigate the path to recovery. From the nerve-racking ER visit, to the seemingly endless waiting for test results, we'll be anxiously wondering, "Are they going to be OK?" as our kids are asking, "When can I get back in the game?"

Remember now, Werner points out, "...each concussion patient is unique." Recovery may include some bedrest, but returning to full health is dependent on a few key factors:

- Do we have baseline test results to measure what a full recovery looks like? Check!
- Do we have a course of care, which includes motor sensory testing of the vestibular system? Double check!

This sounds great, but where do you find an expert like Werner.

There is good news. In case you don't know Werner, like I do, he assures us, "FYZICAL Therapy & Balance Centers extensively trains their physical therapists, physical therapists assistants, audiologists, and athletic trainers in state-of-the-art technology and treatment for concussion." Werner knows what can be done. He tells us, "Physical therapists taking an active

approach to treating concussions with PT can play a key role in returning our patients back to full participation in their sports and daily lives. We know the positive aspects of exercise and physical activity, and managing concussion is right in our wheelhouse."

All of us hope, or pray (or both), our superstars do not get hurt out there. If they do, have we done everything we can to ensure a full and speedy recovery? After all, we want the very best for our children and for them to not only live their lives, but

LOVE THEIR LIVES.

Sincerely,
Parents of Your Local Youth Sports Teams

**The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of an anonymous parent of a high school athlete and do not necessarily reflect the views of Successful Outcomes.*

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>SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES

A Realtor Regains Her Career

Nancy Deckard, a 65-year-old realtor from Siesta Key, FL hurt her knee and couldn't walk, much less climb stairs. Would she ever be able to resume her career? What happened next was remarkable, as she explains here in her own words.



I had been sick for a while, was taking antibiotics, and was feeling pretty weak and tired. As I began to get better, I started to exercise again to try to lose some of the weight I'd gained and regain my strength.

But the next day after I'd started to exercise again, my husband and I took the grandkids to Disney World and I was in pain, severe enough that my husband had to practically carry me back to the car.

You can't really climb stairs and show houses if you have to use a walker or a cane.

I'm a realtor and have been for 33 years, and it's really important for me to have my mobility. And now, I was forced to use a walker. You can't really climb stairs and show houses if you have to use a walker or a cane.

I received a cortisone shot in my knee and got a referral to a physical therapy clinic. But the cortisone shot really didn't help and I quit the physical therapy after a week and a half because the more I put weight on my leg, the more pain I felt in my knee. I was already in so much pain that I couldn't sleep at night and I thought the therapy was doing more damage to my knee, not helping me get better.

I went to my orthopedic surgeon in Sarasota and told him I really wanted to avoid surgery or knee replacement if I could. I wasn't looking to become a bionic woman. He recommended physical therapy (again) and told me about FYZICAL®, and that they could use aquatic therapy to help me.

Well, I love the water and I thought this sounded like a good idea. Plus, my quality of life at this point was miserable

anyway, so I was willing to try it. We live in a condominium on the beach and it was too painful for me to walk on the beach or even walk down to the pool.

I went to therapy at FYZICAL three days a week and rested on my off days to start. During two of the visits each week, I worked with Ruth King and Jillianne Medina in the pool. Usually, I'd use the underwater treadmill for 20 minutes and then do freestanding exercises, using therabands, high-density noodles and paddles. I also did exercises to strengthen the muscles around the knees, exercises for the hips and knees, and foot circles. The other visit each week I worked on land with Jillianne and Steve Brown, and they were careful not to push things too soon. If it hurt, they told me to stop immediately. After each therapy session, they iced my knees to reduce swelling.

I came to understand during therapy that I needed not just to work on my knee, but on building my core and the muscles around my knee to support me. They were with me through every session, and after the therapy ended, they gave me two pages of exercises for me to continue to do at my pool. We also have a fitness center where we live, but I was a little worried about using it.

Steve, on his own time, met me and my husband at our fitness center and designed a customized program for me based on the machines they had. He also told me the machines to avoid using – and why. He even designed a program for my husband, too.

Today, I have my mobility back and can walk again ... pretty important in my job.

The people I met at FYZICAL were so caring and helpful, even after my rehabilitation ended. I cannot say enough good things about them.

A Therapist's Viewpoint

At FYZICAL, we take a team approach to treating patients. All of our therapists understand the



fundamentals of the healing process. We are in constant communication to ensure optimal results. We also understand the patient is coming with their own unique set of circumstances that requires individualized care to enhance the healing process. This is fundamental to creating a healing environment for people suffering from a chronic injury. Nancy was suffering for over three months when she came to FYZICAL. Below is a brief view of her case.

The patient hurt her knees exercising and climbing stairs, with bilateral knee OA and limitations in range of motion in both flexion/extension. Her pain was severe when taking steps or other ADLs, 5 on scale of 10 at best and 9 of 10 at worst. During initial intake, her ROM was 5-90 for right knee and 0-95 for left knee. Nancy suffered difficulties with walking, limited ROM, poor functional leg strength, functional limitations and poor balance.

Client initially unsure about physical therapy based upon bad experience with another clinic prior to coming to FYZICAL. Therapists Ruth King, Jillianne Medina and Steve Brown placed emphasis on listening to the client, explaining each program and reasons for it, using correct equipment, and starting client with the appropriate load for her current tolerance level during rehabilitation.

After a combination of land and aquatic therapy, patient was able to walk and regained significant ROM. Knee flexion improved bilaterally to 116 and 117 respectively. She increased strength to good and regained her normal gait pattern with good balance. Her pain level decreased to 0 at best and 5 at worst.

– Keefe Fugleberg, *Evaluating Therapist*,

» SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES

Bouncing Back From A Fall

How a retiree who sustained two compression fractures at the T8 vertebrae location regained her independence.

My name is Phyllis Hatch. I am 86 years old, retired, and living in Sarasota, Florida with my husband, Ray. We've been married for 66 years.

My story begins on January 10, 2014. I had gotten up during the night to go to the kitchen and take some medication. It was dark, but a nightlight was turned on. I don't recall what happened, exactly, but before I knew it, I was lying on the ceramic tile floor of my kitchen, having hit my head on the table as I fell. I sustained two compression fractures at the T8 vertebrae location in my back from that fall. Then, later this year in April, I fell again coming out of the dentist's office. At my age, my doctor felt surgery to repair the spinal fractures was not a good risk.

Prior to that first fall, I maintained a very active lifestyle. I should mention that my husband, Ray, had polio at the age of 16 and has a full leg brace on his left leg running from his hip down into his shoe. Because of this, I do a great many things around the house and outside in our yard that most wives don't normally do. I'm accustomed to being an active person and before retiring, I worked for 27 years for the Department of Labor in New York. Once we moved to Sarasota, I worked for an insurance agency.

We have two sons and one of them is a truck driver. He is regularly on the road

for 30-40 days and returns with large loads of laundry that I normally wash for him. I also take care of his business accounting. We live in a wonderful neighborhood and enjoy many activities with our friends. I'm not a big television or computer person, preferring to be outside in my yard or being active with our friends.

So, as you can imagine, the accident that injured my back changed the tenor of our lives completely. After the first fall in January, I had nurses come to my house to help me. After the second fall in April, I went to FYZICAL for 8 weeks of physical therapy.

There were so many things I found exceptional about FYZICAL. Part of the therapy sessions had me in a support harness that is attached to the ceiling while I walked. It kept me from falling while I was engaging in the physical therapy exercises and gave me a strong sense of security. It felt great to be able to walk without the fear of falling, so I was able to fully focus and put all my energy into the sessions. I also did work lying on my back and using a therapy ball to strengthen my core muscles, doing leg exercises and moving from side to side.

I also have two pages of printed exercises and instructions that I use at home. I do them every other day right now, splitting them into two sessions where I do one page in the morning and the second page in the late afternoon. I don't have a bench at home like they have at the FYZICAL clinic, so I do the lying down exercises on my bed. I am finding that this is building up my strength and endurance.

My experiences with FYZICAL have been wonderful and productive. The staff is exceptional. I cannot say enough about the warmth and care they offer to every single patient. If a physical therapist is



between patients and they see you doing your session, they always take time to come over and chat and ask about your progress. A woman I know who works at our local Publix grocery store in the flower department recently fell and broke her arm, and she is going through physical therapy with FYZICAL. My husband has also been to FYZICAL after breaking his leg, and has had equally positive experiences with his therapy sessions. I think the world of the people at FYZICAL.

I have learned new ways of managing my balance from FYZICAL, and I am finally getting back to some of my pre-fall activities. For example, I was able to vacuum my house this week, for the first time since that first fall in January, and it felt good to know I have regained enough strength to accomplish some small household chores. I am confident that my physical therapy is improving my overall health and sense of balance.

My parting gift to the whole crew at FYZICAL was a big bag of those Hershey's miniature candy bars. I wanted to do something fun to show them my appreciation for the care they've given me. As a result of my physical therapy, I am happy to say that I am regaining a lot of my independence.

“It felt great to be able to walk without the fear of falling, so I was able to fully focus and put all my energy into the sessions.”

—PHYLLIS HATCH

Clinical Perspective

At **FYZICAL**, we are on a mission to stop America from falling. Phyllis came to us after having two recent falls. The second caused a T8 fracture. Below is a brief overview of her case.

Following her two falls, Phyllis presented to us with complaints of constant 5 to 10/10 thoracic and lumbar pain that limited all facets of daily living. Oswestry score of 64% disability indicating difficulty with ADLs, sitting, standing, walking, transfers, and sleeping. Furthermore, her balance was severely impaired and she was not using an assistive device. Both the Tinetti and Berg balance assessments indicated she was at a high risk of falling. Phyllis had poor functional leg, core and postural strength, and was extremely worried she would fall again.

Immediate care was to teach her fall prevention techniques and proper use of a cane to ensure an increased level of safety while continuing to attend PT to work toward returning to a safer, more independent level of function. Assisted by therapist Briana Howell, further care placed emphasis on listening to Phyllis and providing compassionate care.

Balance and gait retraining was aided by use of our harness track system. This allowed Phyllis to practice gait and balance activities while knowing there was absolutely no risk of falling.

After continually progressing during PT treatments, Phyllis has been able to return to normal safe walking and daily functional activities. Oswestry score improved to 12%. Pain diminished to an intermittent 2/10 level. Her strength improved significantly. Balance testing now indicated a low risk of falling and she no longer needs to use her cane. Most importantly, Phyllis regained her freedom and acquired the tools and knowledge to continue safely keeping active on her own. I am so happy for Phyllis. I've never been more excited about the opportunity we have here at **FYZICAL** to help so many people, like Phyllis, live a happy, healthy, and balanced life.

FREE Assessment



FYZICAL[®]

F I R S T

The **FIRST** Step to Quality Healthcare

There is a lack of proper fitness facilities geared toward the unique physiology of older adults, where they can go to perform healthy, strength-building exercises without the fear of injury. Most fitness centers have a younger clientele and focus mostly on acquiring muscle definition and trimness.

But older adults have a different set of health goals, and many are suffering injuries at the hands of those who have not been properly trained in anatomy and physiology. No one knows the musculoskeletal anatomy of the body better than a physical therapist. **FYZICAL**'s vision includes a medically based fitness program where individuals can exercise and achieve a healthy body without the fear of injury.

FYZICAL is now spreading across North America and soon, around the world. Physical therapy is growing to meet demands for a wider range of treatment options, with balance therapy leading the charge. And as the healthcare demands of the largest aging generation grow, **FYZICAL** will be there, able to adapt and meet those demands with a team of world-class experts with decades of experience working on the behalf of the private practice owner to drive success.

FYZICAL is becoming a trailblazer in the PT industry. It's of little surprise then, that they are expanding so rapidly, as PT clinics across the nation are eager help more patients.

Putting CARE back into Healthcare

Designed to help you get quicker access to healthcare for pain and imbalance.

Did you know you can go see a **FYZICAL** therapist (for free!) to see what's wrong and put together a plan of action to heal... before seeing a doctor? That's what we call **FYZICAL First**.

Don't go through the process of scheduling an appointment with your physician, and having him/her write a script for physical therapy when you can go straight to the source. If we determine that you need a referral to a reputable specialist, we will be able to get you an appointment in a fraction of the time it would take you on your own.

Simply complete the form to schedule your free evaluation to help with your pain/injury from an expert in the human body... No risk! Just relief!

Call (833)-**FYZICAL**
(833-399-4225)



YEARS LATER

Individuals across the country will never forget the pain and disbelief watching smoke rise as the twin towers crumbled, disappearing from the New York skyline forever.

Volunteers and first responders risked their own lives to save others, and many are still both mentally and physically affected by injuries sustained during the events. One of these first responders, a New York City Police Officer, is now unable to walk as a result of balance issues originating from the aftermath of 9/11, an event occurring over 15 years ago. Shelly Kraetz, PT from FYZICAL Therapy & Balance Centers of Skaneateles, NY looks forward to the full recovery of this patient.

After driving past Kraetz's clinic and seeing 'Balance' on her sign, he called the office and wholeheartedly stated, "I am coming in to see you." The police officer has been unable to walk on his own for several years, and is now working hard and finally closer to walking again, thanks to therapy from Cali DeSanto, PT from FYZICAL Skaneateles. Helping people love their lives every day!

In candid video, Shelly Kraetz shares this amazing story. Visit www.somag.info/shelly to hear the whole story!